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GREAT THOUGHTS  
OF  
MAHATMA GANDHI

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## FOREWORD

Anthologies have always been favourite companions in the world of books and it is likely that their popularity will continue to exist always. They really satisfy an ever present desire in the human mind to know the best that has been thought and said. Especially is that the case in an age, like the present, of unleisured bustle and crowded hurry when one would like if possible to get the best reading in the shortest space of time. One therefore certainly appreciates the excellent idea of this book wherein is made an attempt—an initial attempt—to get together in short compass some of the best and most noteworthy passages from the writings of Mahatma Gandhi.

There have been several great writers whose works have benefited by considerable excision and abridgment. We know for example that Matthew Arnold strongly

advocated a condensed Wordsworth. In the case of several other writers, we know that only the best that they have written has survived the test of time and the rest has perished. It is however not in that sense that Mahatma Gandhi's writings stand in need of any selective process. Every word of that saint, leader of men, practical idealist and "creator of a new humanity," is a treasure unto the ages. It is little of all that Mahatmaji has written that posterity will willingly let die. Nevertheless as a means of propagation it is essential to bring home to men's minds some of the cardinal principles that Mahatma Gandhi has been preaching. That, one takes it, is the real purpose and the justification for making up this garland of the great thoughts of the world's greatest man.

Where everything is equally good and so essentially important it is difficult to make a selection. One most remarkable feature of Mahatma's writings is that we find in them a sustained simplicity of statement and an utter absence of any ornate flourishes or 'purple patches.' The

thought is always of a high level, the reasoning is always well sustained and the diction always terse and balanced. Every sentence is surcharged with a force that comes of restraint and eloquence gathers from passage to passage with the very simplicity of style and gravity of utterance. The selection here made is fully representative of these qualities of Mahatmaji's style. They have a rare quality and virtue in them which can be born of inspiration only and which reminds us forcibly of the prophets of old. Some of them indeed are bright ringlets of gold that shall shine for ever on the stretched forefinger of time, without exception they are all like the *srutis* of Vedic India, terse, condensed, each and all to be noted, memorised, and transmitted from generation to generation as the priceless repositories of Truth Everlasting.

Of Mahatma Gandhi himself little can be said here which has not been already and so ably said by others. Such great persons as Romian Rolland and A. E., (George Russell), have hailed Mahatma as

the harbinger of peace to a strife-ridden world. To India he is the messiah of liberation. His message of non-violent non-co-operation, of Satyagraha and unity has leavened the masses of India to an unparalleled degree and in our faithful carrying out of his doctrine does our deliverance lie.

It is sincerely hoped that this chaplet of Mahatma's noted sayings, this *Gāndhi-Mala*, will help to bring home to men's bosoms and concerns the spirit of all that Mahatma Gandhi has been teaching and stands for in politics, social reform, and National Ethics and in its humble way serve to speed the gospel of non-violent non-co-operation; the scripture of Satyagraha.

N. P.

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SATYAGRAHA

*" The path of truth is the path of the brave,  
It is beyond the power of the cowards. "*



Lord, Lead India towards the path of truth ; this doing, teach her the religion of Swadeshi, and knit the Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews living in India closer together.





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The best and quickest way to deliverance from the distrust and secret Police Department is to rid the country of false fear and all violence. But till that far-off day arrives the handful of Satyagrahis must be prepared to treat the Prison as their second home.



We can see how the world is moving steadily to realise that between nation and nation, as between man and man, force has failed to solve problems, but that the economic sanction of non-co-operation is far more mighty and conclusive than armies and navies.



Till a new energy is harnessed and put on wheels, the captains of the older energies will treat the innovation as theoretical, impractical, idealistic and so on.



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Disobedience to be civil must be sincere, respectful, restrained, never defiant, must be based upon some well-understood principles, must not be capricious and, above all, must have no ill-will or hatred behind it.



Undisciplined agitation which is a paraphrase of violence of speech or deed, can only retard national growth and bring about even unmerited retribution.



No nations have ever risen without sacrifice and sacrifice can only be spoken of in connection with innocence and not with crime.



Before we become a nation possessing an effective voice in the councils of the nations, we must be prepared to contemplate with equanimity, not a thousand murders of innocent men and women but

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
many thousands. Only then can we attain  
a status in the world that shall not be  
surpassed by any nation.

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Petitions will have value, when the nation  
has behind it the power to enforce its  
will.

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I do not believe in armed risings. They  
are a remedy worse than the disease sought  
to be cured. They are a token of the spirit  
of revenge and impatience and anger. The  
method of violence cannot do good in the  
long run.

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We have a better method. Unlike that  
of violence it certainly involves the exer-  
cise of restraint and patience; but it  
requires also resoluteness of will.

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Most people choose rather to yield to the

## SATYAGRAHA

will of the tyrant than to suffer for the consequence of resistance. Hence does terrorism form part of the stock-in-trade of the tyrant.



The whole campaign of non-co-operation has been conceived in a spirit not of revenge but of Justice.



If truth is violent, I plead guilty to the charge of violence of language. But I could not, without doing violence to truth, refrain from using the language I have regarding General Dyer's action.



It is the right of a citizen to withdraw his co-operation from the state when that co-operation means his degradation.



Non-co-operation becomes a duty when Co-operation means degradation or humili-

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

ation or an injury to one's cherished religious sentiment.

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It is my duty, not by way of punishment or by way of revenge but to the end that I may not make myself responsible for the wrong doing, to withdraw my support off that Government.

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Our success depends solely on our ability to control, guide and discipline the masses.

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The power that an individual or a nation forswearing violence generates is a power that is irresistible. But my argument today against violence is based upon pure expedience, i.e., its utter futility.

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I would urge upon all speakers the exercise of the greatest restraint under the gravest provocation. There is cert-

## SATYAGRAHA

ainty of victory if firmness is combined with gentleness. The cause is doomed if anger, hatred, ill-will, recklessness and finally violence are to reign supreme.



A violent speech is often as injurious as a violent deed. And I am sure that you will not spoil a cause that is just and sacred by any hasty word or action.



Nothing can possibly prevent a Satyagrahi from doing his duty because of the frown of the authorities.



We must secure an atmosphere of enlightened non-violence as fast as possible, not the non-violence of the weak but the non-violence of the strong, who would disdain to kill but would gladly die for the vindication of the truth.



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The end to me is just. I fight to bolster up no fraud or injustice. The means are equally just. In the prosecution of the fight, Truth and Non-violence are the only weapons.

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There is no instrument so clean, so harmless and yet so effective as non-co-operation.

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Once the infallibility of non-co-operation is realised, there is an end to all blood-shed and violence in any shape or form.

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Non-co-operation is a process of evolution; it has most aptly been described as Evolutionary Revolution.

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Sages of old mortified the flesh, so that the spirit within might be set free, so that

## SATYAGRAHA

their trained bodies might be proof against any injury that might be inflicted on them by a tyrant seeking to impose their will on them.



I would risk violence a thousand times than risk the emasculation of a whole race.



I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence.



I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than that she should in a cowardly manner become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour.



I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment. Forgiveness



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adorns a soldier. But abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature.

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I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the Rishis and Saints. It is meant for the common people as well.

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Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.

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Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the

## SATYAGRAHA

evil-doer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant.



Non-violent non-co-operation will and must remain the creed of the nation that has grown weary of camouflage, humbug, and honeyed words.



Non-co-operators will make a serious mistake, if they seek to convert people to their creed by violence. They will play into the hands of the Government, if they use the slightest coercion towards anybody in the course of their propaganda.



Non-co-operation is nothing if it does not strike at the root. And you strike at the root when you cease to water this deadly tree of the British Government by means of open and honorable non-co-operation.



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

This campaign of non-co-operation has no reference to diplomacy, secret or open. The only diplomacy it admits of is the statement and pursuance of truth at any cost.

\* \* \*

There is bound to be non-co-operation, wherever there is evil, oppression and injustice, whether anybody wishes it or not.

\* \* \*

We have ceased to believe in ourselves or the Government. The present movement is an attempt to change this winter of our despair into the summer of hope and confidence.

\* \* \*

When the people have one mind and ability of management, and recognise the necessity of non-violence, if only as a business proposition, Swaraj is won.

\* \* \*

## SATYAGRAHA

Hitherto the people have been the football of officials or so-called representatives. Non-co-operation enables the people to become the players in the game.



Civil disobedience is not a state of lawlessness and license, but presupposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint.



No certificate of merit from the world will give us success, if we have not earned it by the sweat of the brow.



At the present moment, the Governing authority has no respect for us or for our feelings. We have no faith in it. In these circumstances co-operation is a crime.



It is contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian, and more

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
especially as a soldier under a system of  
Government, which has brought about  
India's economic, moral and political  
degradation.

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There is no room for foolhardiness in  
this non-violent war. We do not propose  
to go to jail or die by an immoral act. We  
must mount the gallows while resisting  
the oppressive laws of this Government.

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I hope there will be non-violent non-co-  
operators enough in India, of whom it will  
be written : " They suffered bullets without  
anger and with prayer on their lips, even  
for the ignorant murderer ".

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The case of non-co-operators depends for  
success on the cultivation of public opinion  
and public support. They have no other  
force to back them. If they forfeit public

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opinion, they have lost the voice of God for the time being.



Complete civil disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it. An out and out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state.



Civil resistance is a most powerful expression of soul-anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state.



When a Government becomes lawless in an organised manner, civil disobedience becomes a sacred duty and is the only remedy open specially to those who had no hand in the making of the Government or its laws.



Civil disobedience is the inherent right

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
of a citizen. He does not give it up  
without ceasing to be a man. Civil dis-  
obedience is never followed by anarchy.

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Every state puts down criminal dis-  
obedience by force. It perishes if it does  
not. But to put down civil disobedience  
is to attempt to imprison conscience.

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\* \*

Civil disobedience can only lead to  
strength and purity. A civil resister never  
uses arms and hence, he is harmless to a  
state that is at all willing to listen to the  
voice of public opinion.

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\* \*

Civil disobedience becomes a sacred  
duty when the state has become lawless,  
or which is the same thing corrupt. And  
a citizen who barter with such a state  
shares its corruption or lawlessness.

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## SATYAGRAHA

Human nature in India has advanced so far that the doctrine of non-violence is more natural for the people at large than that of violence.



Non-payment (of taxes) is a privilege. This is meant not to enrich the resisters, but by their voluntary poverty to enrich the nation.



Disregard of laws relating to revenues or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the state, although such laws in themselves inflict no hardship and do not require to be altered, would be assertive, aggressive or offensive civil disobedience.



Defensive civil disobedience is involuntary or reluctant non-violent disobedience of such laws as are in themselves bad and



GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
obedience to which would be inconsistent  
with one's self-respect or human dignity.

\* \* \*

The only virtues I want to claim are truth  
and non-violence. I lay no claim to super-  
human powers, I want none. I wear the  
same corruptible flesh that the weakest of  
my fellow beings wears, and I am therefore  
as liable to err as any.

\* \* \*

Co-operation with the Government is as  
much a weakness and a sin, as alliance  
with suspended violence.

\* \* \*

Rivers of blood shed by the Government  
cannot frighten me ; but I would be deeply  
pained even, if the people did so much as  
abuse the Government for my sake or  
in my name.

\* \* \*

To expect me to give up the preaching

## SATYAGRAHA

of civil disobedience is to ask me to give up preaching peace, which would be tantamount to asking me to commit suicide.



I wanted to avoid violence, I want to avoid violence. Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed.



The Government want to goad us into violence or abject submission. We must do neither. We must retort by such civil disobedience as would compel shooting.



Swaraj depends upon our ability to control all the forces of violence on our side.



I believe in non-violence as the only remedy open to us. I believe in the power of suffering to melt the stoniest heart.



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

We must by our conduct demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India, as he professes to feel behind the machine gun.

\* \* \*

The campaign of Civil dis-obedience has been forced on the non-co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and free press.

\* \* \*

A non-co-operator or his associate who uses coercion has no apology whatever for his criminality.

\* \* \*

If I can have nothing to do with the organised violence of the Government, I can have less to do with the unorganised violence of the people. I would prefer to be crushed between the two.

\* \* \*

Non-Co-operation, though a religious and

## SATYAGRAHA

strictly moral movement, deliberately aims at the overthrow of the Government, and it is therefore legally seditious in terms of the Indian Penal Code.



The path of a Satyagrahi is beset with insurmountable difficulties. But in true Satyagraha there is neither disappointment nor defeat. As truth is all powerful, Satyagraha can never be defeated.



A Satyagrahi never does anything out of fear from without. He should fear only God.



A Satyagrahi never desires to reach the goal by harbouring or increasing ill-will or hatred against his opponent.



Victory obtained by violence is tantamount to a defeat, for it is momentary.

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Then there is increase of ill-will between both the parties and each prepares to give battle to the other.



We do not desire to obtain justice by harbouring ill-will against the Government but by good-will. Hatred ever kills, Love never dies.



What is obtained by Love is retained for all time. What is obtained by hatred proves a burden in reality ; for it increases hatred.



Satyagraha, to me, is not a mere shibboleth. It is the rule of life. Everything appears to me to be lifeless without truth.



Satyagraha—the law of love is the law of life. Departure from it leads to disinte-

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gration. A firm adherence to it leads to regeneration.



If India adopted the doctrine of love as an active part of her religion and introduced it in her politics, Swaraj would descend upon India as from heaven.



At least in the majority of cases, if not indeed in all, the force of love and pity is infinitely greater than the force of arms. There is harm in the exercise of brute-force, never in that of pity. The force of arms is powerless when matched against the force of love or of the soul.



The force of love is the same as the force of the soul or truth. We have evidence of its working at every step. The universe would disappear without the existence of that force.



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Passive resistance is a method of securing rights by personal suffering; it is the reverse of resistance by arms. When I refuse to do a thing that is repugnant to my conscience, I use soul-force.

\* \* \*

If I do not obey the law and accept the penalty for its breach, I use soul-force. It involves sacrifice of self.

\* \* \*

It is contrary to our manhood, if we obey laws repugnant to our conscience. Such teaching is opposed to religion and means slavery.

\* \* \*

When we do not like certain laws, we do not break the heads of law-givers, but we suffer and do not submit to the laws. That we should obey laws whether good or bad is a new-fangled notion.

\* \* \*

## SATYAGRAHA

Passive resistance, that is, soul-force is matchless. It is superior to the force of arms. How, then, can it be considered only a weapon of the weak.



Wherein is courage required—in blowing others to pieces from behind a cannon or with a smiling face to approach a cannon and to be blown to pieces?.....Believe me that a man devoid of courage and manhood can never be a passive resister.



Passive resistance is an all-sided sword; it can be used anyhow; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood, it produces far-reaching results. It never rusts and cannot be stolen.



Real home-rule is possible only where passive resistance is the guiding force of



GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

the people. Any other rule is foreign rule.

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Those who want to become passive resisters for the service of the country have to observe perfect chastity, adopt poverty, follow truth and cultivate fearlessness.

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Passive resistance cannot proceed a step without fearlessness. Those alone can follow the path of passive resistance who are free from fear whether as to their possessions, false honour, their relatives, the Government, bodily injuries, or death.

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If the world believes in the existence of the soul, it must be recognised that soul-force is better than body-force: it is the sacred principle of love which moves mountains.

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## SATYAGRAHA

Ahimsa requires deliberate self-suffering, not a deliberate injuring of the supposed wrong-doer. In its positive form, Ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity.



The first and last principle of passive resistance is that we should not inflict hardships on others, but put up with them ourselves in order to get justice.



Just as fire by its touch removes all dirt from things so Satyagraha will remove all miseries and pains. It is a "panacea of all evils."



A passive resister never wants to embarrass a government or anybody else..... He, therefore, shuns boycott, but takes the Swadeshi vow as a part of his religion and never wavers in practising it. Fearing God alone, he is afraid of no other power.

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Fear of kings can never make him forsake the path of truth.

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A Satyagrahi fights even unto death. It is thus not an easy thing for everybody to enter upon it.

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In Satyagraha we expect to win over our opponents by self-suffering, i.e., by love.

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The process whereby we hope to reach our goal is by so conducting ourselves as gradually and in an unperceived manner to disarm all opposition.

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We may no longer believe in the doctrine of tit for tat; we may not meet hatred by hatred, violence by violence, evil by evil; but we have to make a continuous and persistent effort to return good for evil.

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## SATYAGRAHA

The country will recognise in Satyagraha a powerful and religious weapon for securing reforms and redress of legitimate grievances.



A Satyagrahi may not resort to surreptitious practices. All that the Satyagrahis do can only and must be done openly.



I would rather see India freed by violence than see her chained to slavery by the violence of her oppressors. This is to suppose the impossible, for violence can never free India, and Swaraj can never be attained without the forces of the soul which form the proper weapon of India, the weapon of love, the force of truth, Satyagraha.



I know that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, that to pardon is manlier than to punish. To refrain from

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

punishing is pardon only when there exists the power to punish.

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Non-violence is not a benevolent submission to the evil-doer. Non-violence resists with all the force of the soul the will of the tyrant.

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None can hope to rise without fulfilling this eternal law of purification through suffering. Progress is to be measured by the amount of suffering undergone by the sufferer.

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Effective non-co-operation depends upon complete organisation. Disorderliness comes from anger. There should be an entire absence of violence. Violence means in every case retrogression and useless waste of innocent lives.

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## SATYAGRAHA

India can now display only moral bravery. Non-co-operation is self-sacrifice. I wish to conquer you (Englishmen) by my sufferings.



The follower of Truth and Ahimsa will conquer the tyrant's will but he will suffer punishment even unto death for disobeying his will until the tyrant himself is conquered.



Our fight has for its object friendship with the whole world. Non-violence has come amongst men and it will stay. It is the harbinger of the peace of the World.



## POLITICS

Stern action is required on our part if we are to make any headway with ourselves and make any impression upon the officials that they are not to consider themselves as masters of the people but as their trustees and servants who cannot hold office if they mis-behave themselves and prove unworthy of the trust reposed in them.

\* \* \*

Englishmen will never see the truth so long as they permit their vision to be blinded by arrogant assumption of superiority or ignorant assumption of infallibility.

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## POLITICS

A Government is an instrument of service only in so far as it is based upon the will and consent of the people. It is an instrument of oppression when it enforces submission at the point of the bayonet.

\* \*

A Government that is loyal to the governed commands their loyalty as a matter of course. When our Government ceases to be loyal i.e., it becomes systematically unjust or oppressive, we should unhesitatingly declare our disloyalty.

\* \*

It is enough for me to see the light and to act up to it, and it is more than enough when I gain companions in the onward march.

\* \*

I have not only no enmity against Englishmen, but I regard much in English character as worthy of my emulation. I



GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
count many of them as my friends. It is  
against my religion to regard any one as  
my enemy.

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My speeches are intended to create  
disaffection such that the people might  
consider it a shame to assist or co-operate  
with a Government that has forfeited  
all title to confidence, respect or sup-  
port.

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I have discovered that the present  
representatives of the Empire have become  
dishonest and unscrupulous. They have  
no real regard for the wishes of the people  
of India and they count Indian honor as  
of little consequence.

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I fully expect it will be found that even  
in promoting disaffection towards an unjust  
Government, I have rendered greater service

## POLITICS

to the Empire than I am already credited with.



The Government, great and mighty though it is, will have to bend before this irresistible force. No Government can possibly withstand the bloodless opposition of a whole nation.



Even the most despotic Government cannot stand except for the consent of the governed which consent is often forcibly procured by the despot. Immediately the subject ceases to fear despotic force, his power is gone.



I detest autocracy. Valuing my freedom and independence I equally cherish them for others. I have no desire to carry a single soul with me, if I can not appeal to his or her reason.



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Those who claim to lead the masses must resolutely refuse to be led by them if we want to avoid mob law and desire ordered progress for the country. In matters of vital importance, leaders *must act* contrary to the mass of opinion if it does not commend itself to their reason.

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It is easier to oust a Government that has rendered itself unfit to govern than it is to cure unknown people in a mob of their madness.

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Every citizen silently but none the less certainly sustains the Government of the day in ways of which he has no knowledge. Every citizen therefore renders himself responsible for every act of his Government.

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## POLITICS

The sole justification for the existence of the State is the assumption that it promotes the well-being of its people. This alone constitutes its claim to the allegiance of its subjects.



The state has everywhere grown to be a most formidable engine of tyranny and repression, of organised violence and plunder, by which a few persons govern and exploit the many.



Democracy which at one time, it was hoped would serve as a panacea for all social evils, has proved to be far worse than the lawless, feudal regime of the Middle Ages.



A state does not exist by virtue of sheer brute force but by gaining the moral support of the good people in it. Evil in itself

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is sterile. It is self-destructive; it exists and flourishes through the implication of good that is in it.



The only way in which people can escape from the clutches of a corrupt state is to cease to participate, directly or indirectly, in its evil.



It may be that, in the transition state, we may make mistakes; there may be avoidable suffering. These things are preferable to national emasculation.



It is my firm opinion that Europe to-day represents not the spirit of God or Christianity, but the spirit of Satan. And Satan's successes are the greatest when he appears with the name of God on his lips.



I would co-operate a thousand times

## POLITICS

with this Government to wean it from its career of crime, but I will not for a single moment co-operate with it to continue that career.



Better for me a beggar's bowl than the richest possession from hands stained with the blood of the innocents.



Under an unjust Government, imprisonment of innocent men must be regarded as their ordinary lot even as disease is the ordinary state of persons living in insanitary conditions.



In this age of brute force, it is almost impossible for any one to believe that any one else could possibly reject the law of the final supremacy of brute force.



I want India to recognise that she has a

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soul that cannot perish and that can rise triumphant above every physical weakness and defy the physical combination of a whole world.

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I am wedded to India, because I owe my all to her. I believe absolutely that she has a mission for the world. She is not to copy Europe blindly.

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India's acceptance of the doctrine of the Sword will be the hour of my trial. I hope I shall not be found wanting.

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India does not want bolshevism. The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to any one who restores so-called order.

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Swaraj is freedom for every one, even the smallest among us, to do as he likes

## POLITICS

without any physical interference with his liberty.



The hardest fibre must melt in the fire of love. I cannot be dislodged from that position because I know that when the British or any other nation does not respond, the fire is not strong enough, if it is there at all.



Restraint is the law of our being. For highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint. Suffering is thus the badge of the human tribe.



Satisfaction is in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.



If we wish to evolve the spirit of democracy out of slavery, we must be scrupulously exact in our dealings with our opponents.





## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

An expectant and believing people growing under misery and insult believe that I have a message of hope for them. I do believe that I have a message of hope and certain deliverance. But there is no deliverance and no hope without sacrifice, discipline and self control.



Most institutions, and a British Legislative Council most of all, thrive upon obstruction. The disciplined obstruction of the Irish members made practically no impression upon the House of Commons.



A minister who refuses to serve is better than one who serves under protest. Service under protest shows that the situation is not intolerable.



Manners and methods change with the times. We must grow with our years.

What was good enough food for our babyhood cannot be good enough for manhood.



What I am attacking, is the system. I have no quarrel with the Englishman as such. I honor individuals among them to-day as I did before my discovery of the unimprovableness of the existing system.



Litigation has come to be regarded, and rightly so, as a sort of gambling. However just your cause and however true your case, you cannot be sure of winning it.



But the worst feature of the system of the administration of justice now prevalent is the wholesale demoralisation of the people.



We must be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

with us. We must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as enemies of the country.



Courage, Endurance, Fearlessness and above all Self-sacrifice are the qualities required of our leaders.



I believe that, in the midst of all the bloodshed, chicane and fraud being resorted to on a colossal scale in the West, the whole of humanity is silently but surely making progress towards a better age.



India by finding true independence and self-expression through an imperishable Hindu-Muslim unity and through non-violent means, *i.e.* unadulterated self-sacrifice, can point a way out of the prevailing darkness.



What I plead for is not a bloody revolution, but a revolution in the thought world such as would compel a radical revision of the standard of life in the higher services of the country.



It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the maker and itself.



By allying myself with the weak party, by teaching him direct, firm, but harmless action, I make him feel strong and capable of defying the physical might.



See what this Empire means to India:—



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

exploitation of India's resources for the benefit of Great Britain ; an ever increasing military expenditure, and a civil service the most expensive in the world ; disarmament and consequent emasculation of a whole nation lest an armed nation might imperil the life of a handful of you (Englishmen) in our midst ; traffic in intoxicating liquors and drugs for the purpose of sustaining a top-heavy administration ; progressively repressive legislation in order to suppress an ever growing agitation seeking to give expression to a nation's agony and degrading treatment of Indians residing in the dominions.

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\* \* \*

Bravery on the battlefield is impossible for us. Bravery of the soul still remains open to us. I know you will respond to that also. I am engaged in evoking that bravery.

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\* \* \*

British rule, to-day, lies under a shadow. It is tainted with the blood of the innocent victims of Jallianwala, and with treachery towards Islam.

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\* \*

Councils are no factories for making stout hearts. And freedom is miasma without stout hearts to defend it.

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\* \*

My whole soul has risen against the existing system of Government, because I believe that there is no real freedom for India under the British connection, if Englishmen cannot give up the fetish of their pre-destined superiority.

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\* \*

I am certainly hoping that before long it would be possible for India to co-operate with England on equal terms.

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\* \*

The system that the Viceroy and his

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

colleagues, whether Indian or English, administer, possesses all the attributes of Satan—deceitfulness, hypocrisy, unscrupulousness, and unmitigated tyranny on occasions and its justification tempered by half-hearted confessions.

\* \* \*

For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive. I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India.

\* \* \*

Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life. The law of a patriot is not different from that of the patriarch. And a patriot is so much the less a patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian.

\* \* \*

We have so fed ourselves with the history of other nations, that we find it

impossible to believe that we can attain our ends without a repetition of a Thirty Years' or a Hundred Years' War and therefore without military training and huge armaments.

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\* \*

I have a horror of the word 'expediency' because of its bad odour. As a rule expediency is often opposed to morality and does not exclude the use of violence.

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\* \*

A reformer who is enraged because his message is not accepted must retire to the forest to learn how to watch, wait and pray.

\*  
\* \*

I doubt if the steel age is an advance upon the flint age. I am indifferent. It is the evolution of the soul to which the intellect and all our faculties have to be devoted.

\*  
\* \*



Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian.

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\* \*

Bravery is not a quality of the body, it is of the soul. I have seen cowards encased in tough muscles, and rare courage in the frailest body.

\*  
\* \*

We are not at war with individual Englishmen. We seek not to destroy English life. We do desire to destroy the system that has emasculated our country in body, mind and soul.

\*  
\* \*

Fort William and the palaces of Calcutta represent an insolent exploitation of the uncomplaining and highly cultured peasantry of this fair province (Bengal).

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\* \*

## POLITICS

We are at war with nothing that is good in the world. In protecting Islam in the manner we are, we are protecting all religion. In protecting the honor of India, we are protecting the honor of humanity.

\* \*

We desire to live on terms of friendship with Englishmen but that friendship must be the friendship of equals, both in theory and in practice.

\* \*

This Government has deliberately emasculated us, kept us under the perpetual fear of our neighbours and the whole world and drained India of her splendid resources, so that she has lost faith in herself either for defence or for dealing with the simple problem of the growing poverty.

\* \*

I would prefer total destruction of

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

myself and my all to purchasing safety at the cost of my manhood.

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\* \*

They (Englishmen) are far-seeing enough to respond to justice when it is allied with force, whether it is brute-force, or soul-force, they do not mind.

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\* \*

To use violence for securing rights may seem an easy path, but it proves to be thorny in the long run. Those who live by the sword die also by the sword.

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\* \*

None could officiate at the altar of Swaraj, who did not approach it with a pure hand and a pure heart.

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\* \*

Even liberty must not be forced upon us. The democratic spirit demands that a most autocratic minister must yield to a people's will, or resign office.

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## POLITICS

The doctrine of labouring without attachment means as much a relentless pursuit of Truth as a retracing after a discovery of error and a renunciation of leadership without a pang after discovery of unworthiness.



We must adopt a new method for combating the evils of sensational and untruthful journalism and public life.



If we are united in purpose, the Government must obey our will or retire. It is the disturbing factors of which the Government avails itself for the consolidation of its power. When we are violent, it resorts to terrorism ; when we are disunited, it resorts to bribery ; when we are united, it resorts to cajolery and conciliation.



The British people will have to beware

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

that if they do not want to do justice, it will be the bounden duty of every Indian to destroy the Empire.

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If the rights of minorities are to be respected, the majority must tolerate and respect their opinion and action.

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\* \*

There is room enough in our great country for as many parties as there are honest men.

\*  
\* \*

Neither railways nor hospitals are a test of a high and pure civilisation. At best they are a necessary evil.

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\* \*

The spirit of democracy cannot be established in a year in the midst of terrorism, whether Governmental or popular.

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## POLITICS

Brute force is the only test the West has hitherto recognised.

\* \* \*

Terrorism and deception are weapons not of the strong but of the weak. The British are weak in numbers, we are weak in spite of our numbers.

\* \* \*

Swaraj will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression.

\* \* \*

Swaraj can never be a free gift by one nation to another. It is a treasure to be purchased with a nation's best blood.

\* \* \*

It is demoralising both for the Government and the governed that a hundred thousand pilgrims should dictate terms to a nation composed of three hundred millions

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

A Government that is evil has no room for good men and women except in its prisons.



In India everything is armed,—peace, loyalty and opinion. Only the people are disarmed.



We must claim, even though it be on the gallows, to hold and openly to express any opinion we choose.



I am convinced that it is not argument but suffering of the innocent that appeals both to the persecutor and the persecuted. The nation will shed her slothful indifference and the governors their callousness by the sight of such suffering.



It is the habitual training given to the soldier that matters. He is converted into

## POLITICS

a vicious animal to be let loose on harmless people on given occasions.

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My purpose as a reformer is to convert people to the view I hold to be right and therefore to see everybody who would care to listen to me.

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Submission to the state law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty.

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When a body of men disown the State under which they have hitherto lived, they nearly establish their own Government.

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There is certainly no sanction provided



GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
prostitutes the law itself to its own base  
ends.

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\* \*

I may be arrested, thousands who take  
part in the peaceful revolt may also be  
arrested, imprisoned, even tortured. The  
rest of India must not lose its head.

\*  
\* \*

It is the sacrifice of the innocents we  
want to make. That alone will appear  
pleasing to God.

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\* \*

We must speak the truth under a  
shower of bullets. We must band together  
in the face of bayonets.

\*  
\* \*

No cost is too great for purchasing  
these fundamental rights and on these  
there can be no compromise, no parleying,  
no conference.

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\* \*

## POLITICS

We must be content to die, if we cannot live as free men and women.

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\* \*

India can never attain freedom by going along the route the Government will take her.

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\* \*

The rule of the majority, when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority.

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If we are to usher in peaceful Swaraj—and Swaraj attained by peaceful means must be peaceful Swaraj—we must be as ready for construction as we seem to be for destruction.

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\* \*

It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God.

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\* \*

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Consistency is a desirable quality but it becomes a hobgoblin when it refuses to see facts.

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\* \*

Jails are no gateway for liberty for the confirmed criminal. They are temples of liberty only for those who are innocence personified.

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\* \*

Liberty is a jilt most difficult to woo and please. We have shown the power of suffering. But we have not suffered enough.

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\* \*

In other countries Governments have been overthrown by sheer brute force, but I have often shown that India cannot attain Swaraj by that force.

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\* \*

To preach disaffection toward the existing system of Government, has become almost a passion with me.

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\* \*

## POLITICS

In ninety-nine cases out of hundred justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India.



I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system.



India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system.



Nations have progressed both by evolution and revolution. The one is as necessary as the other. Death, which is an eternal verity, is revolution, as birth and after-life is slow and steady evolution. Death is as necessary for man's growth as life itself.



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The cell door is the door to freedom. I feel no pity for those who are suffering hardships in the jails of the Government. Innocence under an evil Government must ever rejoice on the scaffold.

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Non-co-operation editors will not refrain from expressing their thoughts for fear of the Press Act.

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\* \*

An editor with an original idea or an effective prescription for India's ills can easily write them out. A hundred hands can copy them. Many more can read them out to thousands of listeners.

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\* \*

No power on earth can stop the onward march of a peaceful, determined and Godly people.

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\* \*

If exhibition of real strength is the best

## POLITICS

propaganda, we must believe that every imprisonment strengthens the people and thus brings Swaraj nearer.

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No big or swift movement can be carried on without bold risks, and life will not be worth living, if it is not attended with large risks.

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We do want to drive out the beast in man, but we do not want on that account to emasculate him.

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\* \*

We want to overthrow the Government. We want to *compel* its submission to the people's will. We desire to show that the Government exists to serve the people, not the people the Government.

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\* \*

Ideals seem to recede from us as we approach them. Manliness lies in accele-

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

rating our motion towards them all the more.

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\* \*

I do not believe that religion has nothing to do with politics. The latter divorced from religion is like a corpse only fit to be buried.

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\* \*

Authority in order to save itself wants to crush freedom of opinion and freedom of association—the two lungs that are absolutely necessary for a man to breathe the oxygen of liberty.

\*  
\* \*

I am a man of peace. I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in a stone, I do not want the peace that you find in the grave; but I do want that peace which you find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the

## POLITICS

arrows of a whole world, but which is protected from all harm by the power of the Almighty God.



Present day politics are based on certain ideas and principles which are not necessarily connected with ideas and principles of right-doing or righteous conduct.



Government is conducted more or less like a game of chess. Success sanctifies its politics; failure spells its condemnation.



So long as the desire of the people is to prevent the committal or perpetuation of Governmental wrong-doing, there could be no hate.



A politically helpless people would necessarily nurse in their breasts their hatred against the wrong-doer.





## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The Government is unmoral or non-moral because it is a system, and a system has no soul and may be directed equally to the perpetuation of a wrong or a right.

\* \* \*

For human beings who want to live a fine moral life, a law must above all things be a *just* law. Modern politics makes a fetish of law merely because it is law.

\* \* \*

In the west politics are daily getting degraded because the custodians of religion and morality among western people, the church and the clergy, are kept in their places muzzled for fear of trenching upon the domain of the law.

\* \* \*

Law cannot be an end in itself. So when it can be shown that a law is unjust, the state, if it does not or cannot abrogate

## POLITICS

it forthwith, must see to it that no court of law should pronounce a man guilty for violating such a law.



Order exists for the protection of higher life—the moral life of human beings, for it is clear that not life but only death is orderly.



When Law and Order are instrumental in promoting a peace which is the peace of death, of a steady deterioration of the forces of life, of a helpless subjection to the forces of wrong-doing, or a helpless drifting along, then no code of politics should stand in the way of all possible moral and peaceful efforts on the part of a people to shake off the spirit of enslavement that may have overtaken it.



Politics in India must not follow in open

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

blindness of spirit the path which has been taken by it in the West, the path of soulless materialism,

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Rebellion in a just cause is a duty, the extent of opposition being determined by the measure of the injustice done and felt.

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No empire intoxicated with the red wine of power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and thus the British Empire which is based upon organised exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe.

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\* \*

Purity is the only weapon of the weak in body. The strong in body in their insolence often mobilise their 'hard fibre'

## POLITICS

and seek to usurp the very function of the Almighty.

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\* \*

It is my firm belief that we shall obtain salvation only through suffering and not by reforms dropping on us from England, no matter how unstintingly they might be granted.

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\* \*

It would be a thousand times better for us to be ruled by a military dictator than to have the dictatorship concealed under sham councils and assemblies.

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The mob frenzy can be controlled; the police frenzy spells disaster for an unprepared people. We have groaned under it all these long years. Thank God, India is to-day prepared to meet the ordered frenzy of the government.

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\* \*

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

There is no such thing as slow freedom. Freedom is like a birth. Till we are fully free, we are slaves. All birth takes place in a moment.



If a man will only realise that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave him. This is the key to self-rule or home-rule.



It is a superstition and an ungodly thing to believe that an act of a majority binds a minority..... All reforms owe their origin to the initiation of minorities in opposition to majorities.



## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

The test of friendship is assistance in adversity, and that too, unconditional assistance. Co-operation that needs consideration is a commercial contract and not friendship.

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\* \*

My goal is friendship with the world and I can combine the greatest love with the great opposition to wrong.

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Brute force must be ruled out of account in all deliberations. Reference must be had always to reason and never to the sword.

\*  
\* \*

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Evil can never be overcome with evil, it ceases only through good.



Satan mostly employs comparatively moral instruments and the language of ethics to give his aims an air of respectability.



Our civilization, our culture, our Swaraj depend not upon multiplying our wants—self-indulgence, but upon restricting our wants—self-denial.



I hold that a life of perfect continence in thought, speech and action is necessary for reaching spiritual perfection.



Ours has become an age of hypocrisy and insincerity. Men, to whatever religion they may belong, care only for the external

## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

aspects of religion and give the go-by to all its fundamental principles.



Some people rightly fear that, if religion were to lose its hold on men's minds, the whole world would go to rack and ruin; and they are making strenuous efforts to make men tread the path of morality.



A detailed examination of the fundamental principles of all religions has shown that they are all alike based on the same eternal laws of morality.



Ethical religion is made up of the principles of morality that are binding on all men and women of the world.



It is the duty of every human being to look carefully within, and see himself



GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
as he is, and spare no pains to improve  
himself in body, mind and soul.

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\* \*

We should all be able to find our happiness in righteousness and veracity, in spite of the pains and losses which we may have to suffer in this world.

\*  
\* \*

A life of goodness is enjoined upon us, not because it will bring good to us, but because it is the eternal and immutable law of Nature.

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\* \*

Good works are indeed more than food and raiment to us. We should feel more grateful to one who gives us an opportunity of doing a good deed than to him who feeds us in our hunger.

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\* \*

Morality does not consist in cleanliness, or knowledge, or industry. All these,

## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

of course, are a part of morality, but by themselves they are not sufficient to make a man moral.



True morality consists not in following the beaten track, but in finding out the true path for ourselves and in fearlessly following it. True progress, is impossible without such a strenuous pursuit of truth.



The power to do good does not come to us from without. It exists always within us, and we have only to develop it by proper means.



The highest moral law is that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind.



No man can be called virtuous who is not fearless in the formation, as well as the expression, of his opinions, and who

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

does not unflinchingly obey the dictates of his conscience,



That man alone is a true devotee of God who never dreams of the reward of his devotion. Hence, the man who is true to his friends, but false to his enemies, must be regarded as a coward.



Love would turn to poison unless it is strictly limited by moral considerations.



You may afford to incur the wrath of the state by violating its laws; but you can never afford to incur the wrath of God by violating the moral law. Indeed, disobedience to the law of the state becomes a peremptory duty when it comes in conflict with the law of God.



No nation and no individual can ever

## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

violate the moral law with impunity.....  
Unrighteousness may triumph for a while,  
but terrible destruction awaits it sooner  
or later.

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\* \*

The blessings of Peace, and Freedom,  
and Happiness cannot fail to be bestowed  
on the nation that follows the law of  
Righteousness.

\*  
\* \*

A time, however, will come to every  
man to make his choice between Truth  
and Falsehood, and then he may resolve  
deliberately to renounce evil and cleave to  
the good, irrespective of consequences.  
Then alone can he be said to have realised  
the meaning of morality.

\*  
\* \*

True religion is, in fact, identical with  
morality. There is no religion higher  
than Truth and Righteousness.

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

True nobility consists in doing the right voluntarily and deliberately.

\* \* \*

Man is bound to be guided in all his actions by moral considerations.

\* \* \*

His greatness is based neither on accumulated treasures nor on destructive armaments, but solely on righteousness and veracity.

\* \* \*

The welfare of humanity is bound up with the pursuit of morality. All the great moral virtues, like love, charity, gratitude and patriotism, have for their ultimate end the good of mankind.

\* \* \*

Man is worse than the brute, so long as he is selfish and indifferent to the happiness of others.... Man becomes great

## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellowmen.

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\* \*

A republic that is not based on moral foundations, and that is not composed of unselfish men and women would be worse than an autocracy.

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\* \*

The moral law requires that the strong men of a community or nation should regard it as their paramount duty to protect the weak and the oppressed.

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\* \*

If all men realised the obligation of service, they would regard it a sin to amass wealth; and then, there would be no inequalities of wealth and consequently no famine or starvation.

\*  
\* \*

That man alone can be called truly religious or moral whose mind is not

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

tainted with hatred or selfishness, and who leads a life of absolute purity and of disinterested service ; and that man alone can be called truly wealthy or happy either.



I shall not make a fetish of religion and I cannot justify any evil in its sacred name... I shall even go to the length of rejecting the divinity of the most ancient Shastras, if they do not appeal to my reason.



Hinduism is not a missionary religion. There is a place in it for the worship of all the prophets of the world. It tells everyone to adore God according to his proper faith or Dharma and thus to live in peace with all religions.



I am a reformer through and through.

## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

but my zeal never takes me to the rejection of any of the essential things of Hinduism.

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\* \*

I believe implicitly in the Hindu aphorism, that no one truly knows the Sastras who has not attained perfection in innocence (Ahimsa), in truth (Satya), and self-control (Brahmacharya) and who has not renounced all acquisition, or possession of wealth.

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\* \*

Varnasrama Dharma is, in my opinion, inherent in human nature and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science.

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\* \*

It is, I hold, against the genius of Hinduism to arrogate to one's self a higher status or assign to another, a lower one. All are born to serve God's creation, a Brahmin with his knowledge, a Kshatriya with his power of protection,



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

a Vaisya with his commercial ability and  
a Sudra with his bodily labour.



No man whose character is not pure  
can be said to be really healthy. The  
body which contains a diseased mind can  
never be anything but diseased.



Modern civilisation has rendered even  
fresh air somewhat costly, for, in order  
to breathe fresh air, we have to go out of  
towns, and this means expense.



There can be absolutely no doubt that  
impure air is the root-cause of disease  
in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred.



Thousands of diseased persons have  
been cured by mere exposure to the air and  
to the sun-light.



## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

Man is not born to eat, nor should he live to eat. His true function is to know and serve his Maker; but, since the body is essential to this service, we have perforce to eat. Even atheists will admit that we should eat merely to preserve our health, and not more than is needed for this purpose.



He who is able to control the palate, will easily be able to control the other senses.



We have sedulously cultivated such false notions in the matter of eating that we never realise our slavishness and our beastliness.



Since Nature always provides just enough food to feed all created beings, it follows that he who takes to himself more

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

than his normal share of food, is depriving another of his legitimate share.

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Many scientists have concluded that man is intended to live, not on meat, not even on all vegetables, but chiefly on roots and fruits.

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\* \*

I will only say that my own experience, as well as my study of the subject, has confirmed me in the conviction that a fruit-diet is best for us.

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\* \*

There is no fear at all of men ruining their health by eating *too little*; and the great need is for a reduction in the quantity of food that we generally take.

\*  
\* \*

I can say from my experience that there is absolutely no need to eat more than twice a day, for a man who has passed the period

## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

of youth, and whose body has attained its fullest growth.

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\* \*

Exercise is as much of a vital necessity for man as air, water and food in the sense that no man who does not take exercise regularly, can be perfectly healthy.

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\* \*

The ideal kind of exercise is that which gives vigour to the body as well as to the mind; only such exercise can keep a man truly healthy, and such a man is the farmer.

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\* \*

Truly has walking been described as the Queen of all exercises. The main reason why our *Sadhus* and *Fakirs* are strong as a class is that they go about from one end of the country to the other only on foot.

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Nature herself has provided an excellent covering for us in our skin.

\* \*

The idea that the body looks unseemly in undress is absurd, for the very best pictures are those that display the naked body.

\* \*

There can be no doubt that men and women can never be virile or strong unless they observe true Brahmacharya.

\* \*

The true laws of health demand that the man that loses his wife, as well as the woman that loses her husband, should remain single ever after.

\* \*

So vital indeed is the relation between our health and the life that we lead that we can never be perfectly healthy unless we lead a clean life.

\* \*

It is our duty to keep the body pure and unstained from within as well as from without, so as to render it back to the Giver, when the time comes for it, in the state of purity in which we got it. If we fulfil the terms of the contract to God's satisfaction, He will surely reward us, and make us heirs to immortality.

\*  
\* \*

There is an incessant struggle going on within us between our Soul and Satan for the control of our body. If the soul gains the ascendancy, the body becomes a most potent instrument of good ; but if the devil is victorious in the struggle, it becomes a hot-bed of vice.

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\* \*

Perfect health can be attained only by living in obedience to the laws of God, and defying the power of Satan.

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## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

It is my full conviction that, if only, I had lived a life of Brahmacharya all through, my energy and enthusiasm would have been a thousandfold greater and I should have been able to devote them all to the furtherance of my country's cause as of my own.



If health is to be sought for in order that we might indulge in luxury or pleasure, or pride ourselves over our body and regard it as an end in itself, then indeed it would be far better that we should have bodies tainted with bad blood, by fat and the like.



All religions agree in regarding the human body as an abode of God. Our body has been given to us on the understanding that we should render devoted service to God with its aid.



## ETHICS, HEALTH, ETC.

Character is based on virtuous action, and virtuous action is grounded on Truth. Truth, then, is the source and foundation of all things that are good and great. Hence, a fearless and unflinching pursuit of the ideal of Truth and Righteousness is the key-note of true health as of all else.

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Love for my country, I consider to be part of my religion, though not the whole of it. Unless one has love for one's own country, one cannot be said to observe one's own religion perfectly.

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If in trying to observe our religion, we have to part from wife and children, even lose them, there is nothing heartless about it, but I rather feel convinced that it is our duty so to do.

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## ON UNITY

Hindus and Muslims must cease to suspect one another's motives; and we should believe ourselves to be incapable of wronging one another.



Some have suggested that we, Hindus, can assist our Mahomedan countrymen only on conditions. Conditional assistance is like adulterated cement which does not bind. The only question, therefore, is now to help.



I have thrown myself heart and soul into this question (Khilafat) because British pledges, abstract justice, and religious sentiment coincide.



## ON UNITY

Hindu-Muslim Unity consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows.

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Swaraj for India must be an impossible dream without an indissoluble union between the Hindus and Muslims of India. It must not be a mere truce. It cannot be based upon mutual fear. It must be a partnership between equals each respecting the religion of the other.

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\* \*

What is the alternative to Hindu-Muslim Unity? A perpetuation of slavery? If we regard each other as enemies, is there any escape from eternal foreign domination for either of us?

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The Hindus as also the Mussulmans, whenever one of them goes mad, have two courses left open. Either to die valiantly

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
without retaliation, that will at once arrest  
the progress of mischief, or to retaliate and  
live or die.

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\* \*

Hindu-Muslim Unity is nothing, if it is  
not a partnership between brave men and  
women. We must trust each other always,  
but in the last resort we must trust our-  
selves and our God.

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If it is the interposition of the British  
Government which keeps us from fighting  
one another, the sooner we are left free  
to fight, the better for our manhood, our  
respective religions and our country. It  
will not be a new phenomenon if we fought  
ourselves into sanity.

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\* \*

India cannot cease to be one nation  
because people belonging to different reli-  
gions live in it. The introduction of

foreigners does not necessarily destroy the nation, they merge in it.

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\* \*

The Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsees and the Christians who have made India their country are fellow-countrymen, and they will have to live in unity if only for their own interest.

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The Hindus flourished under Moslem sovereigns and Moslems under the Hindu. Each party recognised that mutual fighting was suicidal.... With the English advent the quarrels recommenced.

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Is the God of the Mahomedan different from the God of the Hindu? Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads so long as we reach the

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
same goal? Wherein is the cause for  
quarrelling?

\* \* \*

The fact is that we have become enslaved, and therefore, quarrel and like to have our quarrels decided by a third party.

\* \* \*

The more we advance in true knowledge, the better we shall understand that we need not be at war with those whose religion we may not follow.

\* \* \*

Am I, then, to fight or kill a Mahomedan in order to save a cow?.....If I were overfull of pity for the cow, I should sacrifice my life to save her, but not take my brother's. This, I hold, is the law of our religion.

\* \* \*

## SOCIAL REFORM

. No one who hugs untouchability has any right to denounce this Government. He who seeks equity must come with clean hands is a maxim of universal application.

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\* \*

This Government has robbed us of our honor and put one of our religions in peril. In my humble opinion, it is a sin for the nation to receive education in schools financed by or under the influence or control of the Government.

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Is it not better that our children should receive their education in a free atmosphere, even though it may be given in

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

humble cottages or in the shade of trees and under teachers who, being themselves free, would breathe into our children the spirit of freedom ?



The existing system of education is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire exclusion of indigenous culture. It ignores the culture of the heart and the hand and confines itself simply to the head. Real education is impossible through a foreign medium.



It is my firm opinion that no culture has treasures so rich as ours has. We have not known it, we have been made even to deprecate its study and depreciate its value.



My religion forbids me to belittle or disregard other cultures as it insists under

pain of civil suicide upon imbibing and living my own.



We do not regulate or license houses of ill-fame. We do not provide facilities for thieves to indulge their propensity for thieving. I hold drink to be more damnable than thieving and perhaps even prostitution.



The system of education (in India) was conceived and born in error, for the English rulers honestly believed the indigenous system to be worse than useless. It has been nurtured in sin, for the tendency has been to dwarf the Indian, body, mind and soul.



Swaraj is unattainable without the removal of the sin of untouchability as it is without Hindu-Muslim unity.





## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Untouchability cannot be given a secondary place in the programme. Without the removal of the taint Swaraj is a meaningless term. Workers should welcome social boycott and even public execration in the prosecution of their work.



No lover of his country can possibly achieve its general advance if he dares to neglect the least of his countrymen.



We have segregated the 'Pariah' and we are in turn segregated in the British Colonies. Indeed there is no charge that the Pariah cannot fling in our faces which we do not fling in the faces of Englishmen.



The 'depressed' classes. problem is a vital part of the cause. Swaraj is as inconceivable without full reparation to the

‘depressed’ classes as it is impossible without real Hindu-Muslim unity.



Have we not made the Pariah crawl on his belly ? Have we not segregated him ? And if it is our religion so to treat the Pariah, it is the religion of the white race to segregate us.



This non-co-operation is a process of self-purification. We may not cling to putrid customs and claim the pure boon of Swaraj.



In the struggle between capital and labour, it may be generally said that more often than not the capitalists are in the wrong box. But when labour comes fully to realise its strength, I know it can become more tyrannical than capital.



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

To seek justice without resorting to violence and by an appeal to the good sense of the capitalist by arbitration is lawful means.

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I passionately desire the utmost freedom for our women. I detest child marriages. Women must have votes and an equal legal status.

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Untouchability is repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity and love.

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\* \*

Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing.

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\* \*

Untouchability is a corroding poison that is eating into the vitals of Hindu society.

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\* \*

## SOCIAL REFORM

No man or God can consider another man inferior to himself. He must consider every man as his blood-brother. It is the cardinal principle of every religion.



I do not desire to be born again, but if I am really born again, I desire to be born amidst the untouchables, so as to share their difficulties and to work for their liberation.



Picketing is a duty a citizen must discharge, when he is not helped by the state.



The Police use the gun when the thief betrays an inclination to break into another's house. A picket uses the pressure of shame, i.e., love, when he warns a weak

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

brother against the dangers of the drink  
evil.

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The liquor shops are an insufferable  
curse upon society.

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Under every system of Government,  
total prohibition, so far as I can see, will  
be insisted upon by the nation.

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## ECONOMICS

Boycott is a form of revenge, and for its being able to help us to secure a just solution we have to create a world-opinion.



Boycott is a punishment and is conceived in a vindictive spirit.



Is it a big sacrifice for every Hindu and Mussulman to discard all foreign cloth and to use only Khadi? And if India is not to have that ability will it not also be proof that India is unfit for any sacrifice?



The country should evince sufficient organising ability, resourcefulness and discipline necessary for bringing the emi-

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

nently practical Swadeshi enterprise to a successful end. Let us hope and pray that the country will.



Judged by the economic standard, thirty-five years of our political activity have resulted in disaster. The masses of India to-day are less able to stand the ravages of famine and disease than they were fifty years ago. They are less manly than they were at any period in the history of the nation.



Without a cottage industry the Indian peasant is doomed. He cannot maintain himself from the produce of the land. He needs a supplementary industry. Spinning is the easiest, the cheapest and the best.



The cleanest and the most popular form of Swadeshi is to stimulate hand-spinning

and hand-weaving and to arrange for a judicious distribution of yarn and cloth so manufactured.



True Swadeshi consists in introducing the spinning wheel in every household, and every household spinning its own yarn.



Hand-spinning does solve the problem of India's chronic poverty and is an insurance against famine.



The scheme of Non-co-operation does not aim at starving any labourer outside the country, it is meant to stop him from starving and keeping naked the people of India.



The ideal no doubt is for every village to spin and weave for itself, just as to-day



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

most villages grow corn for themselves. It is easier for every village to spin and weave for itself than to grow all its corn.



The best National Education for India is undoubtedly an intelligent handling of the spinning wheel.



Attacks on hand-spinning notwithstanding, I cling to the belief that Swaraj is unattainable without the beautiful art becoming universal in India.



If hand-spinning became universal, every home would get a share of the crores and without any complicated machinery being necessary.



I prophesy that, whatever happens to the other parts of the national programme, Swadeshi in its present shape will bide for-

ever and must, if India's pauperism is to be banished.



Free trade for India has proved her curse, and held her in bondage.



The central idea is not so much to carry on a commercial war against foreign countries as to utilise the idle hours of the nation and thus by natural processes to help it to get rid of her growing pauperism.



I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of omission and commission, but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the *Charka*.



Every revolution of the wheel spins peace, goodwill and love. And with all that inasmuch as the loss of it brought

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
about India's slavery, its voluntary revival with all its implications must mean India's freedom.

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The Lancashire cloth, as English historians have shown, was forced upon India, and her own world-famed manufactures were deliberately and systematically ruined.

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Agriculture and hand-spinning are the two lungs of the national body. They must be protected against consumption at any cost.

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The economics that disregard moral and sentimental considerations are like wax-works that being life-like still lack the life of the living flesh.

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Our cities are *not* India. India lives in her

seven and a half lacs of villages, and the cities live upon the villages. They do not bring their wealth from other countries.



The city people are brokers and commission agents for the big houses of Europe, America and Japan. The cities have co-operated with the latter in the bleeding process that has gone on for the past two hundred years.



I do not know that the condition of the cattle in any other part of the world is as bad as in unhappy India. We may not blame the Englishmen for this. We may not plead poverty in our defence. Criminal negligence is the only cause of the miserable condition of our cattle.



Before the British advent, India spun

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
and wove in her millions of cottages just  
the supplement she needed for adding to  
her meagre agricultural resources. This  
cottage industry, so vital for India's  
existence, has been ruined by incredibly  
heartless and inhuman processes as  
described by English witnesses.

\* \* \*

Little do they (town-dwellers) realise  
that the government established by law in  
British India is carried on for this exploi-  
tation of the masses.

\* \* \*

No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can  
explain away the evidence that the  
skeletons in many villages present to the  
naked eye.

\* \* \*

It is our duty to take the Swadeshi Vow ;  
in it lies the prosperity of India. To use  
foreign articles rejecting those that are

## ECONOMICS

manufactured in India is to be untrue to India ; it is an unwarranted indulgence.



It is obvious that we cannot reject indigenous articles, even as we cannot reject the native air and the native soil because they are inferior to foreign air and soil.



The true Swadeshi ideal consists in the use of hand-woven cloth only made out of hand-spun yarn.

Those who think deep will see that such Swadeshi contains pure economics....Imitation of English economics will spell our ruin.



I think of Swadeshi not as a boycott movement undertaken by way of revenge. I conceive it as a religious principle to be followed by all.



## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Swadeshi is a religious discipline to be undergone in utter disregard of the physical discomfort it may cause to individuals.



We become a prey to invasion if we excite the greed of foreign nations by dealing with them under a feeling of dependence on them. We must learn to be independent of every one of them.



It is machinery that has impoverished India....It is due to Manchester that Indian handicraft has all but disappeared.



Machinery has begun to desolate Europe. Ruination is now knocking at the English gates.



The mill-owners can establish in thousands of households the ancient and sacred

handlooms, and they can buy out the cloth thus woven. Whether the mill-owners do this or not, people can cease to use machine-made goods.



India has not wished to possess machinery and great cities. The old spinning-wheel and the ancient indigenous education have ensured its wisdom and its good.



India cannot be free so long as she voluntarily encourages or tolerates the economic drain which has been going on for the past century and a half. Foreign cloth constitutes the largest drain voluntarily permitted by us. It means sixty crores of rupees annually paid by us for piece-goods. If India could make a successful effort to stop that drain, she can gain Swaraj by that one act.





## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

The way to carry out a successful boycott of foreign cloth is to increase the output of yarn. And this can only be done by hand-spinning.



The householder should train himself to see art and beauty in the spotlessly white *Khaddar* and to appreciate its uneven softness.



If it is sinful to use foreign yarn, it is a virtue to manufacture more Swadeshi yarn in order to enable us to cope with the want that would be created by the disuse of foreign yarn.



Under the pre-British economy of India, spinning was an honourable and leisurely occupation for the women of India.



The art of spinning being graceful and

## ECONOMICS

musical and as it did not involve any great exertion, it had become the monopoly of women. But it is certainly as graceful for either sex as is music for instance. In hand-spinning is hidden the protection of women's virtue, the insurance against famine, and the cheapening of prices.



The revival of hand-spinning is the least penance we must do for the sin of our forefathers in having succumbed to the satanic influences of the foreign manufacturer.



Just as we cannot live without breathing and without eating, so is it impossible for us to attain economic independence and banish pauperism from this ancient land without reviving home-spinning.



The beauty of spinning is that it is

GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI  
incredibly simple, easily learnt and can  
be cheaply introduced.

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There is not the slightest reason why  
the spinning-wheel may not co-exist  
with the spinning-mill even as the domes-  
tic kitchen co-exists with hotels. . . .  
The mills may suffer destruction. But the  
spinning-wheel is a national necessity.

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I feel convinced that the revival of hand-  
spinning and hand-weaving will make the  
largest contribution to the economic and  
the moral regeneration of India.

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Spinning was the cottage industry years  
ago and if the millions are to be saved from  
starvation, they must be enabled to re-in-  
troduce spinning in their homes, and every  
village must re-possess its own weaver.

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## ECONOMICS

Swadeshi work is the most constructive of all. It does not lend itself to speeches so much as to solid action. It is not possible to save fifty crores of rupees annually by speeches or demonstrations.



Swadeshi yarn means even distribution of wealth from an occupation next in importance only to agriculture. It supplements agriculture and therefore automatically and materially assists to solve the problem of our growing poverty.



The cleanest and the most popular form of Swadeshi is to stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving and to arrange for a judicious distribution of yarn and cloth so manufactured.



We have spun many a yarn during all these long 35 years on the Congress plat-

## GREAT THOUGHTS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

form. Let us now spin the truest yarn that India wants, and let me tell you that, if you want to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, there is no other way out of the difficulty but spinning for the whole of India.

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You will not gain your economic freedom until India becomes self-contained so far as her food and clothing are concerned.

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Our orthodox politicians dread to think of anything too striking, or too simple or too drastic. The spinning-wheel is too simple and yet too drastic and too striking an instrument for Swaraj in one year.

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Is it such a visionary ideal—an attempt to revive an ancient occupation whose destruction has brought on slavery, pauperism and the disappearance of the inimitable

## ECONOMICS

artistic talent which was once all expressed in the wonderful fabrics of India and which was the envy of the world?



The more I have studied the economics of India and the more I have listened to the mill owners of India, the more convinced I have become that until we introduce the spinning-wheel in every home of India, the economic salvation and freedom of India is an impossibility.



# गांधी अध्ययन केन्द्र

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